

**Premier Gordon Campbell
Forestry Billboard Unveiling
July 25, 2003**

Check Against Delivery

We're here today to unveil the first of what will be 23 billboards that will go up across the province over the next few months.

We're doing this because it's important for British Columbians to recognize how important forestry is to all of our lives and to all of the public services that we all expect and deserve in our great province.

Without a strong forest industry, we don't have a strong economy. And if we don't recognize the great things that are done in British Columbia by our forest workers and our forest industry, sometimes we undermine the very prosperity that has defined British Columbia in the past.

One in seven jobs in the province depend on forestry. Fifteen per cent of our provincial economy is driven by forestry. Every single second, \$450 of forest products are exported to world markets.

We have to nurture that resource, we have to protect that resource, and we have to make sure we are maximizing the benefits of that resource for the working families that depend on it in communities across the province.

From the community of Vancouver to the community of Fort St. James, from Fort Nelson to Creston, from Elkford and Sparwood to Zeballos on Vancouver Island, communities large and small and everyone in this province depends on our forest industry.

We're using these billboards because it's important for British Columbians to know about their industry and because each year we have five million of visitors that come to our province from around the world who can benefit from this great resource. And as we look to the future we can do even more for our forest communities and forest families.

We have already launched a \$12-million dream house project in the city of Shanghai in China. We see the Chinese market as a massive opportunity with huge potential to bring together forest workers, forest industries, forest companies and forest communities so we can serve that market well.

Currently we have a revitalization tour that is taking place across British Columbia in 38 separate communities. Like these billboards, it's letting people know things like the fact that in B.C. we only use less than one third of one percent of all of our forest lands each year.

British Columbians have planted five billion trees. More than two hundred million trees a year are planted in our forests – new trees that grow and create a long term, sustainable industry. That's six trees every single second that are planted in our province.

I want to thank all of you for being here today. I want to thank the Forests Minister for his hard work and I want to thank Mayor Campbell and Mayor Kinsley for being here to help us unveil this today.

It is the beginning of a program that says to British Columbians: be proud of your forests, be proud of what you do, be proud of the workers and their communities, and remember the contribution that this great industry makes to our province every day of every year.